

REMARKS

The Office Action dated April 3, 2009, and made Final, has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1, 3-32, 49-51, 53, 54, 56, and 57 are now pending in this application. Claims 1, 3-32, and 49-55 stand rejected. Claims 52 and 55 have been canceled. Claims 56 and 57 are newly added. No additional fee is due for newly added Claims 56 and 57.

The rejection of Claim 55 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the written description requirement is respectfully traversed. Claim 55 has been canceled. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 112, first paragraph, rejection of Claim 55 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 1, 3-10, 23, 24, and 53-55 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0002386 to Wolfe, et al. (hereinafter referred to as “Wolfe”) in view of U.S. Patent 6,371,852 to Acres (hereinafter referred to as “Acres”) is respectfully traversed.

Initially, Applicants respectfully submit that no combination of Wolfe and Acres describes nor suggests the claimed invention. For example, no combination of Wolfe and Acres describes permitting an unenrolled player to play a gaming device using an uncarded player account. Applicants respectfully traverse the assertion on page 4 of the Office Action that Wolfe describes “permitting the unenrolled player to play a gaming device using an unenrolled player account, (¶ [0118]).” Rather, Applicants submit that Wolfe merely describes that a hot player may be a player that possess a player tracking card or a player that does not possess a player tracking card. Specifically, paragraph [0118] of Wolfe describes a hot player as “a player who has inserted a sufficiently high amount of money into a gaming machine within a time certain period. Hot players can be either carded or uncarded.” The fact that the hot player lacks a player tracking card does not describe nor suggest that the hot player is playing using an uncarded player account. Rather, Applicant submits that Wolfe merely describes using the wireless device to locate hot players that do not possess a player

tracking card, and approaching those players to offer enrollment. As such, Wolfe does not describe nor suggest enabling an unenrolled player to play using an uncarded player account.

Moreover, no combination of Wolfe and Acres describes nor suggests presenting the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player *would have earned if enrolled in the player tracking system*. Applicants respectfully traverse the assertion on page 4 of the Office Action that Acres describes such a recitation at column 7, rows 24-30 and at column 8, rows 4-8. Rather, Applicants submit that Acres describes applying credits to a player's account as an award for signing up with a player-tracking system, or as a gift on a particular date such as the player's birthday. Moreover, Acres describes imposing eligibility criteria for awarding a big win, such as a bonus win. For example, at column 7, line 67 through column 8, line 8, Acres describes awarding a big win bonus, wherein the casino may use eligibility criteria for awarding bonuses. As an example, the casino may condition that bonuses are to be paid only to carded players as an incentive to enroll players in the player-tracking system. Bonuses could still be paid to uncarded players, however such bonuses may be reduced to provide an incentive for unenrolled players to enroll in the player-tracking system. As such, Applicants submit that Acres merely describes using a set of rules to determine whether a bonus is to be paid to a particular player, or whether a full bonus is to be paid to a particular player, based on whether the player is enrolled in a player-tracking system. However, Acres does not describe nor suggest that a particular player is *presented* with enrollment incentives that the player *would have earned if enrolled* in the player tracking system.

Wolfe describes a casino information management system that includes a casino server (20) and a plurality of hand-held devices (12) connected to the casino server (20) by a wireless communication system (13). A casino employee may use a hand-held device (12) to coordinate drop box processing, receive and place beverage orders from players, facilitate communications between multiple players, and coordinate jackpot processing. Moreover, the employee may use the hand-held device (12) to obtain information from the casino server (20) about a particular gaming machine or a group of gaming machines, or about a particular player or a group of players. For example, an employee may locate players that have

wagered more than a specified amount of money within a certain time period. If such a player does not have a player account for a player tracking service, the employee may register the player using the hand-held device (12). Notably, as discussed above, Wolfe does not describe nor suggest permitting an unenrolled player to play a gaming device using an uncarded player account. Moreover, as acknowledged by the Examiner, Wolfe does not describe nor suggest presenting the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in the player tracking system.

Acres describes a method in which account credits may be applied to a player's account, as an incentive to the player to open the account. When the account is opened by a casino, an account credit may be applied to the account. Moreover, Acres describes inducing a player to use a tracking card by awarding each player points that are proportional to the money wagered by the player. Players consequently accrue points at a rate related to an amount wagered. The points are displayed on a display. The player may then redeem points for selected merchandise, meals in casino restaurants, or the like, which each have assigned point values. Notably, as discussed above, Acres does not describe nor suggest presenting an unenrolled player with incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in the player tracking system.

Claim 1 recites a method of registering an unenrolled player in a player tracking system, wherein the method comprises “permitting the unenrolled player to play a gaming device using an uncarded player account . . . detecting a triggering event . . . notifying the unenrolled player after the occurrence of the triggering event . . . presenting the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in the player tracking system....”

No combination of Wolfe and Acres describes nor suggests a method of registering an unenrolled player in a player tracking system, as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, no combination of Wolfe and Acres describes nor suggests permitting the unenrolled player to play a gaming device *using an uncarded player account*. Moreover, no combination of Wolfe and Acres describes nor suggests *presenting* the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player *would have earned if enrolled* in the player tracking

system. Rather, Wolfe merely describes using a wireless device to locate hot players that do not possess a player tracking card and approaching those players to offer enrollment, and Acres describes applying credits to a player's account as an incentive to open the account.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres.

Claims 3-10, 23, 24, and 53-55 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 3-10, 23, 24, and 53-55 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 3-10, 23, 24, and 53-55 likewise are patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 1, 3-10, 23, 24, and 53-55 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 11-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolfe in view of Acres and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0127284 to Walker, et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Walker") is respectfully traversed.

Wolfe and Acres are described above. Walker describes a system (100) that includes one or more controllers (102) coupled in communication with one or more game machines (104). The system (100) enables messages to be sent between a controller (102) and a game machine (104), from one game machine (104) to another game machine (104), and/or from a game machine (104) or controller (102) to another device, such as a large display screen. Messages may include, for example, status messages, gaming-related messages, messages relating to comps or a player's casino visit, and/or news alerts. Moreover, messages may be categorized based on criteria such as a type of message, message content, an originator of a message, and/or a length of a message.

Claim 1 recites a method of registering an unenrolled player in a player tracking system, wherein the method comprises "permitting the unenrolled player to play a gaming device using an uncarded player account . . . detecting a triggering event . . . notifying the unenrolled player after the occurrence of the triggering event . . . presenting the unenrolled

player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in the player tracking system....”

No combination of Wolfe, Acres, and Walker describes nor suggests a method of registering an unenrolled player in a player tracking system, as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, no combination of Wolfe, Acres, and Walker describes nor suggests permitting the unenrolled player to play a gaming device *using an uncarded player account*. Moreover, no combination of Wolfe, Acres, and Walker describes nor suggests *presenting* the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player *would have earned if enrolled* in the player tracking system. Rather, Wolfe merely describes using a wireless device to locate hot players that do not possess a player tracking card and approaching those players to offer enrollment, Acres describes applying credits to a player’s account as an incentive to open the account, and Walker describes a casino communication system that enables game machines, controllers, and/or other devices to send and display messages to players.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres and Walker.

Claims 11-16 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 11-16 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 11-16 likewise are patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres and Walker.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 11-16 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 17-22 and 25-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolfe in view of Acres and U.S. Patent 6,896,618 to Benoy, et al. (hereinafter referred to as “Benoy”) is respectfully traversed.

Wolfe and Acres are described above. Benoy describes a player tracking system that includes a player tracking account server (60) that collects player data from a player tracking unit (56) within each of a plurality of gaming devices (90, 92, 94, 96). Each player tracking

unit (56) includes a card reader (24), a speaker and microphone (58), and a touch screen display (16). The player tracking unit (56) may be used to login to the player tracking system as an existing player and/or to enroll in the player tracking system as a new player before, during, or after the player plays a game at a gaming device (90, 92, 94, 96).

Claim 1 recites a method of registering an unenrolled player in a player tracking system, wherein the method comprises “permitting the unenrolled player to play a gaming device using an uncarded player account . . . detecting a triggering event . . . notifying the unenrolled player after the occurrence of the triggering event . . . presenting the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in the player tracking system....”

No combination of Wolfe, Acres, and Benoy describes nor suggests a method of registering an unenrolled player in a player tracking system, as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, no combination of Wolfe, Acres, and Benoy describes nor suggests permitting the unenrolled player to play a gaming device *using an uncarded player account*. Moreover, no combination of Wolfe, Acres, and Benoy describes nor suggests *presenting* the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player *would have earned if enrolled* in the player tracking system. Rather, Wolfe merely describes using a wireless device to locate hot players that do not possess a player tracking card and approaching those players to offer enrollment, Acres describes applying credits to a player’s account as an incentive to open the account, and Benoy describes a player tracking unit that enables a player to login to a player tracking system as an existing player and/or enables the player to register as a new player with the player tracking system.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres and Benoy.

Claims 17-22 and 25-32 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 17-22 and 25-32 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 17-22 and 25-32 likewise are patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres and Benoy.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 17-22 and 25-32 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 49-52 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benoy in view of Acres is respectfully traversed.

Benoy and Acres are described above.

Claim 49 recites a player tracking system for uncarded players, wherein the player tracking system comprises "at least one server coupled to said plurality of gaming devices via said network, wherein said at least one server is configured to: track uncarded play of unenrolled players having uncarded player accounts . . . detect an occurrence of a triggering event . . . notify at least one of the unenrolled players after the occurrence of the triggering event . . . present the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in said player tracking system...."

No combination of Benoy and Acres describes nor suggests a player tracking system for uncarded players, as recited in Claim 49. More specifically, no combination of Benoy and Acres describes nor suggests a server configured to track uncarded play of unenrolled players *having uncarded player accounts*. Moreover, no combination of Benoy and Acres describes nor suggests a server configured to *present* the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player *would have earned if enrolled* in said player tracking system. Rather, Benoy describes a player tracking unit within a gaming machine that enables a player to login to a player tracking system as an existing player and/or enables the player to register as a new player with the player tracking system, and Acres describes applying credits to a player's account as an incentive to open the account.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 49 is submitted to be patentable over Benoy in view of Acres.

Claims 50-52 depend from independent Claim 49. When the recitations of Claims 50-52 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 49, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 50-52 likewise are patentable over Benoy in view of Acres.

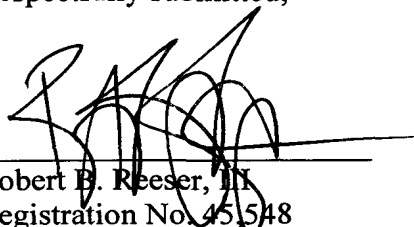
For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 49-52 be withdrawn.

Newly added Claim 56 depends from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claim 56 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that Claim 56 likewise is patentable over the cited art.

Newly added Claim 57 depends from independent Claim 49. When the recitations of Claim 57 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 49, Applicants submit that Claim 57 likewise is patentable over the cited art.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. B. Reeser, III', is written over a horizontal line.

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